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SUBJECT: SOMALIA - UN DETAILS PIRACY CONFERENCE PLANS

REF: NAIROBI 2642

1. Summary: The UN's Somalia political office on November 25 outlined its plans for a Nairobi conference on Somali piracy December 10-11. The UN has invited high level representation from over 50 countries (including the United States, previously forward via separate email) and international organizations with a stake in the Horn's piracy, but it is unclear yet who will come. Day one of the conference will be technical discussions and recommendations; the UN hopes political representatives will ratify outcomes on day two. To frame the conference discussions, the UN is finalizing a report on Somali piracy, with suggested actions. A summary of the report and conference agenda will be sent out by November 26, with the full report available the week of December 1. Kenya is reconsidering its recently announced plans to host a separate piracy conference in December (reftel). End Summary.

2. On November 25 the United Nations Deputy Special Representative to the Secretary General for Somalia Charles Petrie convened a meeting to discuss the UN Somalia office's plans for an international conference on Somali piracy, scheduled for December 10-11 in Nairobi. Petrie said Kenya was reconsidering their wish to host a separate piracy conference this month (reftel); he expected they would support the UN-sponsored gathering instead. To guide the conference and make recommendations for combating piracy, Petrie said the UN had contracted a study of Somalia's piracy which will be finalized the week of December 1, but an abbreviated copy, along with the meeting's agenda, will be released by November 26 (post will forward as soon as available). Day one of the conference will focus on technical discussions and the report's action recommendations; Petrie hopes the political representation will adopt many of the recommendations on day two.

3. Over 50 countries and many international organizations have been invited to the UN-sponsored conference. In addition to countries in the region, Indian Ocean and Pacific Rim countries are included, as are Persian Gulf states and countries with a naval presence in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden. Regional governments are likely to send ministers, Petrie said, but there have been few firm responses yet.

¶4. Reiterating that a 10-12 page summary of the UN-sponsored piracy report will be available by November 26, the report's drafting team leader briefly highlighted its research, findings, and proposed actions. The report covers the origins of Somali piracy and compares it to other regions' sea piracy. It examines Somali piracy's organization and methodology, its destructive economic and humanitarian costs, and possible connections to terrorists. The report surveys the applicable international and regional government's laws concerning piracy. Finally, the study contains 39 recommendations for short-, medium- and long-term actions to combat piracy.

¶5. Petrie stressed the conference will identify concrete steps, or "practical actions" that can be taken on the ground, and these hopefully will be ratified by the political representation on day two. He welcomed internationals to weigh in and help shape the recommendations to make them more feasible and achievable, once the report's abbreviated copy is released. Post will forward conference materials as they are released.

RANNEBERGER